

special study he has made not only in Canada but in the United States, to attain the very high honour of receiving the title that has been conferred upon him. He is one of the best officers of this government, and will be a credit to the Labour Department.

Mr. SPROULE. I notice in one of the newspapers it was stated that this honour was conferred, not on the advice of the government, but by the direct intervention of the Governor General, and that it had not given satisfaction to the government. Is there anything in that statement?

Mr. FIELDING. My hon. friend must not place too much confidence on anything he sees in the public press as to the views of the government, unless it appears in the 'Canada Gazette.' However, the question of the relation of the government to these appointments is a rather serious matter, and I would prefer that my hon. friend should put it when the Prime Minister is in the House.

Post Office Department—to provide for the salary of Hector B. Verret, private secretary, as first class clerk from July 1, 1906, to March 31, 1907, at \$1,600 per annum, \$1,200.

Mr. LEMIEUX. Mr. Verret was one of the officers of the Department of Justice, and he was at the same time acting as secretary to the Solicitor General. When I took charge of the Post Office Department I decided to retain his services. This is no addition to the budget, because Mr. Verret is not replaced in the Department of Justice. He receives the same salary in my department.

Mr. BLAIN. Perhaps the minister would be prepared to state the policy of his department in respect to the salaries of postmasters. We had some trouble with the former Postmaster General in regard to permitting them to engage in other business while they were receiving a fair remuneration.

Mr. LEMIEUX. I have not yet been long enough in the office to frame a policy for the department. But I may say that I hope to be able to treat all the postmasters over this vast country in a spirit of justice, equity and fair-play. As regards the salaries now being paid to postmasters, a committee has been formed to approach the government during recess, a committee formed of country postmasters. I have already received several communications on that subject, and the question of raising their salaries is engaging the attention of the department. The outside service also have sent a delegation recently, and they are endeavouring to obtain better salaries, not only in the Post Office Department, but also in the Departments of Inland Revenue and Customs. During the recess I will have time to examine this question of better

salaries, and after consulting my colleagues, I expect to be able to announce next session what action will be taken.

Mr. STOCKTON. The Postmaster General remembers, for he was present, the meeting of post office officials with the Prime Minister in the council chamber. The request of the outside post office clerks was presented, as also the request of the inside service, and it was stated, I think, that there had been no increase in salaries for twenty years. I thought that they made a very strong case, and I think the Postmaster General was of that opinion. The Prime Minister, at all events, assured the deputation that their request would have the most serious consideration of the government. I know, as a matter of fact, that those gentlemen who composed that delegation are waiting anxiously the result of that interview, and I hope very sincerely that my hon. friend will see his way clear to meet their wishes. When I heard my hon. friend the Finance Minister, when delivering his budget speech, explain in exultant tones the abundant surplus and the great prosperity of the country, I thought that we should be willing to look after the civil servants by increasing their salaries at least oftener than every twenty years. Therefore I hope that my hon. friend the Postmaster General will take a very early opportunity to consult with his colleagues and come to some determination which will be satisfactory to the gentlemen who composed that delegation.

Mr. LEMIEUX. I was present when that delegation met the leader of the House some three or four weeks ago and was pleased to notice that the request made on behalf of the outside service met the approval of both sides of the House. In fact the delegation was headed by hon. gentlemen from both sides of this House and of the Senate as well. The argument they presented struck me as being a very strong one. The statement made by the spokesman of the delegation nearly convinced me that the time has come when we should seriously reconsider the salaries paid to that class of our officers. The cost of living has increased considerably the last ten or fifteen years; and, as the right hon. the first minister said, the ministers most interested in the public service intend studying this question after prorogation and will probably be in a position to make a statement at the next session of this House. That is all I can say at present. But I may add that the officers of the outside service have my deepest sympathy, for I myself am the son of an officer who served his country during forty-five years.

Mr. BARKER. I am very glad to hear what my hon. friend the Postmaster General has just said. I happened to be present on the occasion to which he refers and